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Lively Monologues and Poems

Mary Moncure Parker



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Lively Monologues and Poems

By

MARY MONCURE PARKER

*Author of "Funny Monologues and Poems," "Merry
Monologues," "Jolly Monologues," and the
plays "Art Clubs Are Trumps,"
"Little Miss America," etc.*



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Lively Monologues and Poems

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The Flapper Flops

SCENE.—*The home of the Flapper's friend.*

CHARACTERS: THE FLAPPER.

SUZANNE, *her friend.*

(*The FLAPPER gushes.*)

It all happened this way, Suzanne. What a darling name you have, honey. It's so Frenchy. Imagine my family calling me Ellen. Isn't that atrocious? Simply despicably horrid. I just call myself Elaine, like Longfellow's hero; or I mean heroine; or was it Tennyson's? I never can remember all that literary stuff. My little old fountain pen simply balks at writing Ellen,—sounds like hoopskirts and the Civil War, or something hideously ancient like that. Parents are so passé, aren't they—calling one such names when one is a helpless infant "muling in mother's arms," as Pope says, or was it Shakespeare? Never mind,—some old antique geezer wrote it. Isn't geezer a cute word? Rupert always uses it, no, I mean Ernest,—no, I guess it's Bob. Anyhow, I've adopted it, much to *Pops*^{dad} horror. *Pops*^{dad} despises slang. Isn't it too bad, parents are so old? Moms is at least forty, and Pops forty-two. So how can they possibly understand the pulsations of the heart of youth? I got that out of a book. Isn't it delicious? Give me another chocolate, Suzanne—aren't these wonderful candies?

Well, parents are really useful in some ways. Pops is rather nice about giving me spondulix for glad rags and things. Spondulix is a love of a word. Rupert, no,—I guess that was Ernest, who always said that. I adopted it immediately. The worst thing about Pops is that he wants me to talk so sort of grammarish like. Imagine conversing with an up-to-date Frat man, like a college Prof. or Proferess! He would think I was absolutely batty. Heavenly cats! If Pops heard that! You know, Suzanne, boys will never look at a girl who talks Greek roots and things, anyhow. It's an agonizing fact but if a girl is going to be a "go-getter," she has to dance divinely and talk like a boob, or a clinging kitten. Only clinging kittens don't talk. They only mew, isn't that true, honey? I mean about the men?

Oh, about the story? You are simply perishing to hear it? Well, give me another chocolate as a bracer and I'll sail in.

It was the most tragical thing, honey. You know Rupert Haynes and I had quite a case. He took me to all the dances and the Prom and everything. We talked it all over in the most solemnly serious way and thought we ought to think about getting married. Here's where parents are absolutely colorless and unsympathetic, and simply impossible. Moms and Pops were shocked when I very gently broached the subject. They said sixteen was entirely too infantile, and Moms thought I ought to be spanked and put to bed. Can you imagine such humiliation, Suzanne? I know your heart aches for me,—just to think of it. They said I must never see Rupert again, if I talked such nonsense.

Nonsense! Parents can never remember they

were ever youthful. I wonder if they ever were young in those far off days? All in vain did I tell mother that Rupert was a Soph and had only two years to go to college, and then he could get a position in a bank or some place, and relieve her of the burden of my care which she seemed to feel so much. I said this with a coldness that should have chilled Moms to the bone. But "Love laughs at locksmiths," Dryden says, or was it Mark Twain? That's a silly expression and I don't quite get it, but it has something to do with that wonderful experience, love, anyhow.

Rupert and I were not locked in, physically, just mentally, and we determined to outwit our hard-hearted progenitors. I heard Pops use that word one day, and I always adopt words that sound classy. Just for a blind, Suzanne, Rupert and I pretended we did not want to see each other, but we swore a solemn pact. Now don't shudder, Suzanne, take a chocolate to brace you. We swore a death pact. Don't scream. There, have another chocolate. I wanted to die first and have Rupert put me on a barge like Elaine, and float me down the river, only there isn't any river, only the pond, and that was frozen over. So we said we would both go at once and let our hard-hearted parents suffer when they viewed our cold bodies locked in death. Don't shake so, Suzanne. It is a shivering thing to think about, though. It was hard to decide on a day because it was just before the holidays, and there were so many ~~frat~~ dances we thought we would wait until after Christmas and then, too, Pops promised me a new squirrel coat and I wanted to see how I looked in it. If one is to lie stark and stiff before one's cruel parents, one

wants to look well gown'd and everything. Then, too, I became slightly angry at Rupert because he said I thought more of clothes than of him. That was the first weakening. It was at the Phi Psi dance I met Ernest. Suzanne, he was the best looking thing, tall and blond. I thought I adored short dark men with shiny black hair, like Rupert's; but Ernest had the most marvellous eyes, blue, and they looked at you in the most thrilling way. I danced six dances with him. ~~He had all the latest wrinkles in steps, and he was simply entrancingly clever when he talked, and he had a superior sort of air, commanding kind of, like a king; only *people* are more than kings nowadays, but like a king used to have.~~

Rupert wouldn't speak to me on the way home but drove his ~~machine~~ with his eyes straight ahead. Finally we quarrelled and I told him I did not want to die with him anyhow. He said he supposed I had arranged to die with Ernest, because he was a Junior. I said with biting sarcasm that Ernest would not want me to die. He wanted me to live, and he would be out of college sooner, and we could get married quicker. This made Rupert wince, shudderingly, which was just what I wanted. Suzanne, he became so awfully bitter and cruel in his remarks. I turned and said, "Oh, you are a man and a brute, and I am a weak woman. Why don't you strike me?" I said it in the most tragic way, just like they do in the movies. We parted, Suzanne. Give me another chocolate, please. I can't help the tears in my voice. I went up-stairs and cried all night. Life is a fearful thing, isn't it?

I just determined on something desperate. Don't be shocked, Suzanne. I said I would flirt with a married man, and disgrace myself and my family

forever, to repay them all for their sordidness. So I smiled at old Mr. Wilkins next door when I passed him on the way to school, and what do you think, Suzanne? He stopped, and my heart fluttered with fear. Then he patted me on the head and said:

"Well, if little Ellen hasn't grown to be quite a girl," and I was furious.

Oh, about Ernest? Why, he went back to college. He was engaged anyhow, and then I really don't care for blond men. Rupert? He isn't my sweetie any more. Oh, that's off, too. Why, you see, I really have a crush on Bobby Masters now. He dances adorably, and he is raising the darlingest mustache, and he's a senior. Really those young kids bore one to tears, don't they? I look back over that last year of my life and think how boobyish it would have been to die with a mere child, when one is at the very portals of life.

Bob has such large ideas, and he's an athlete, and he has the most wonderful gray eyes. Life is such a sort of marvellous thing, isn't it, Suzanne?

Do pass the chocolates, honey, I am dying for another one. Those pumps of yours are perfectly lamby things, Suzanne. I think I'll strike Pops for some just like them, to-morrow. I'm really quite fond of Pops when he isn't preachy.

After all parents are quite an institution if one looks at it in the right way, honey.

Oh Suzanne, this chocolate has a cherry in it. Mm! Mm!

Miss Debutante Learns to Swim

SCENE.—*The Bathing Beach at a fashionable summer resort on a morning early in the week.*

CHARACTERS: MISS DEBUTANTE.

HER MOTHER.

A YOUNG MAN.

Oh mother, I don't know why we came to this place. Not a man in sight until the week end, and the girls act in a perfectly disgraceful manner, grabbing the one or two young men that do come. What was the use of all my stunning clothes, and that lovely bathing suit of mine that I wouldn't get wet for the world, and that I only wear on Sunday, when there are only women and a lot of old men to see one? The only thing I have accomplished this summer is to have my swim every week-day morning, and I'm getting to be quite an expert. This old bathing suit looks disgraceful, but I should worry. Who sees it? Let us go home to-morrow. I am sick of this place. Well, I have been in the water an hour and I must dress.

Mother! Quick! Do you see what I see? A man! Young! Good looking! And on Tuesday morning! He is going in for a swim. Look! He has stopped to help old Mrs. Lawson up into her chair. I will run over and see how she feels—What, mother? I hardly speak to her generally? Well, I know—but—Mercy, look at the two Wilson girls. They are almost killing themselves to be

attentive to Mrs. Lawson, and they have on those fancy bathing suits just for show. This one of mine looks shabby, but I will rush over or he might go into the water before I get there and I will miss my chance. Maybe he is only going to stay to-day.

Good-morning, Mrs. Lawson. How are you to-day? Isn't this a lovely morning? No, I have not met Mr. Thompson. Are you here for a prolonged stay, Mr. Thompson? Two weeks? Oh, Glo—I mean how pleasant. We will be here about two weeks longer, I think. Am I going for a dip? Why—I thought I would—Do pardon me, girls. Good-morning. I did not notice you at first. Please excuse me, Mrs. Lawson. Here is your attendant, and I am going for a dip.

By by, girls! Of course you cannot go into the water with those beautiful suits. Aren't they simply swell? By by!

Oo-ooh! The water is cold, isn't it? Swim? Oh, a very little. You will teach me? How adorable! Oh, I'm afraid I will drown! You don't mind my clinging to you, do you? You are so wonderfully strong. It must be splendid to have such muscle. Now the last man that taught me—I mean—we so seldom have such athletes here. Put my arms out so? One—two—three, oh dear! I never will be able to learn. What? You'll give me a lesson every day while you are here? How perfectly wonderful! It must be positively thrilling to know how to swim. A stroke like that? Dear! Dear! don't be peeved, please, at my stupidity. I am improving? Thanks awfully. I am afraid you are a flatterer. What? At least I am not afraid of getting wet? No indeed. Those Wilson girls had on pretty suits, though, didn't they? You think

suits like that are silly—just made for show?
Well—maybe they are. I think so too.

I must really go in and dress for luncheon. If you haven't a place we have a cosy table right by a window, Mother and I. Then I'll see you at luncheon. Good-bye.

Mother, darling, he's the most scrumptious thing! We are not going home for two weeks. Don't you dare to tell him I know how to swim. He's the best one I have had to teach me yet, and don't say a word about that fancy bathing suit I wear sometimes, just for the beach. He thinks such things are absurd.

I am going to put on my pink organdie. He is coming to our table. Remember, not a word about my being an expert swimmer.

After all, this is a lovely place to spend the summer, isn't it, mother darling?

At the Dentist's

SCENE.—*Outside of the door and inside the dental office.*

CHARACTERS: MR. MAN.

CLARA, *his wife.*

THE DENTIST.

(MR. MAN *pleads.*)

Now listen, Clara, I tell you my tooth don't ache at present, not a bit. What's that? You were up all night with me? I am sorry, but the tooth's all right now. Yes, I know you came down to the office with me so I would have the courage to come to the dentist's. You've told me that about ten times. It isn't that I am a coward, but what's the use of bothering a poor little helpless tooth that has let up on you. What? I have been right to the dentist's door three times before, over this tooth, and then gone away? Yes, I know that too, but the same thing happened. The tooth stopped aching.

There is something about a dentist's door that knocks the pain right out of the Da—, I mean blame thing. You're a little woman, Clara, but your heart is as hard as steel. Do you want me to be murdered, or electrocuted or something? Anybody would think you were anxious to be a widow. May be if I go in, I'll murder the dentist and bring disgrace upon the family. I have had it in mind a long time. Yes, I know he is a pleasant man outside

of the office, and belongs to our club, but a man who would deliberately choose to be a dentist ought to be tarred and feathered; or better still, he ought to be chained to one of his own drills, in action, for the rest of his life.

What? Time is flying? What's your hurry? Say, I've waited around for you for hours. I've lost six months out of my life waiting for you on corners and in stores. Don't open that door yet. By the way, Clara, you know that beaded purse you want and that string of indestructible pearls! Well, they're yours. Now let's go home. What's that you say? You can't stand here all day? Neither can I. I must get back to the office. I have an important deal on. You won't stir a step? Now, Clara, listen to reason. Say, how about dinner, and the show with me to-night? And, dearest, you know that swell little sedan you want. It belongs to you if you'll say the word, and that word's *home!* Wait, don't open that door. She's started in and is beckoning to me. Oh, how do you do, Doc! I just ran over to say "Hello." Tooth? Why, it don't bother me now. I have an important business engagement and must run right along.

Let go of my sleeve, Clara. This looks like a frame-up to me. You are the most persistent woman. You see, Doc, my tooth ached a little last night but it doesn't hurt at all now. What? You'll just look at it? Well, don't go hunting around with one of those derricks and stir it up. You know Shakespeare or somebody said "Let the sleeping tooth lie," or words to that effect.

I don't like these dental chairs. (*Sits down.*) Say, if they had any worse looking instruments in Old Nero's time than are in that case over there,

the early Christian Martyrs have my sympathy. What, Clara? I am mixing my dates and my similes? Nero didn't have dental instruments? No, I think the old bird was too tender hearted. Anyhow I am not worrying a-tall about any time but the present. I have other things to think about. Doc, I don't like this bib. Looks like the beginning of a major operation. You'll just look at the tooth? It's that nice little one over in the corner. You wouldn't harm a quiet, innocent little tooth that never hurt you, would you, Doc? I believe you have the evil eye. That blame thing is beginning to stir. It knows a dentist; works in cahoots with you. You can make it crawl or jump through a hoop, or any old thing, just by touching it.

What, Clara? I am a brave man? Don't be sarcastic. I would face a bunch of burglars, or an army of the enemy—but one dentist and that infernal jabber and driller—Ye Gods! Put cotton in my mouth, Doc? Wait. Couldn't you just give me a little medicine and let me put it in myself at home? I might lose the tooth? Well, that wouldn't hurt my feelings. It isn't such a pet that I'd want to keep it forever.

Yes, yes, all right. Go ahead. Have it your way and Clara's. Do your worst, Doc. Do anything when you have a man down. On with the drill! Let dental joy be unconfined! (MR. MAN tries to talk with the cotton in his mouth.) Glub! Glub! Gurgle!

(Fifteen minutes later MR. MAN rises and feels his jaw as he gets out of the chair.)

What, Doc? Feel better? Ye-es. I suppose I

will when I get the hinges to working again. Say, Doc, if you'll put on the gloves with me at the club to-morrow night—well—Heaven help your teeth if I get a whack at them!

Moving

SCENE.—*The new apartment just after the family arrive bag and baggage.*

CHARACTERS: THE FAMILY.

(MOTHER holds forth.)

Thank heaven! That's the last load, and the men have gone. Oh gracious, John. They didn't put that heavy dresser in the bedroom and now we'll have to move it. There's the kitchen table in the parlor. Who attended to this moving? I did? Well, John, if you say another word, I'll shriek. Didn't I have the children to look after? Billy, let that victrola alone. No, I won't play "Home Sweet Home." Come away and don't finger those records. This looks like a junk shop. You are hungry, John? Well, so am I. Now, don't slip out to the corner. If you want any dinner or supper, or such as it is, you'll have to take care of the children. Dorothy, put down that vase. You'll break it. What did you say? You wanted to help? You can help by sitting right still. Go out? No, you look too dirty and I don't want the neighbors to see you until you are cleaned up.

Where are the matches? Such packing! Here they are at the bottom of the kitchen things, and the eggs are all broken and running everywhere. Eggs cost so much too. I asked you to carry them, John. What's that? You ought to be an octopus to carry

all the things I wanted you to hold? Don't try to be funny. Well, never mind. We'll scramble the eggs; they are most of them in a kitchen kettle.

We'll eat crackers to-night. Oh, mercy, John! I just thought of that water color picture. Do see if the glass is broken. Where is it? Heavens! I suppose it's lost. Those other people moved in right on top of us. It's a wonder that we got away with anything that belongs to us. Billy, put that dog out. What's that, John? The neighbors might see him before he is washed? I asked you not to try to be funny. I wish the dog would get lost. Billy, stop your crying. He isn't lost, is he? He's nothing but a cur. We couldn't lose him. That Boston Terrier we had was stolen, not this creature. We ought to give him away but we can't. Billy! stop that screaming at once. No, I did not say we were going to give him away. No such luck.

Mary, cut this bread for mother, that's a good girl. I found a loaf. Where's the bread knife? It should be in the kitchen table drawer, but I suppose we'll find it in the piano bench. Here it is. John, do put those beds up so we'll have a place to sleep to-night. There! Be careful of your language. Where's the hammer? I don't know. You might look in the tool box for a change. It might be there. Be careful, John, of what you say. Remember the children are here. Peggy, let those books alone. You'll have them all finger marks.

Come on, John, and get a bite to eat. Sit on the trunk, Billy and Mary. It won't hurt you for once. John! Of course I asked you to put up the beds, but let's eat now and you can do that afterward. Maybe you'll be better-natured then. Sit in that big armchair. It's all right for once. Oh, I'm dead

tired—simply dead! But say, John, when we get this place all fixed up, it will be really quite homey, won't it, dear? Well, we are all here together, anyhow. I guess it isn't so much the place nor the things around you, it's you and the children that make home, after all, isn't it, John?

Tell Your Troubles to the Policeman

“ Tell your troubles to the P’liceman,”
My pa will always say
When we tell him ‘bout the fusses,
That we have every day

With the chil’ren on our street;
So I made up my mind,
To tell about the boy next door
To the nex’ p’liceman I could find.

A nice big fat one came along,
“ Please, Mister P’liceman, dear,”
I said, but I was kinder ’fraid
When he came up so near.

“ Well, sissy, what’s the matter now?
Want me to ‘rest a boy?
He pulls your hair an’ teases you
An’ breaks up every toy?

“ Well, take my hand,” he said so kind,
“ We’ll settle things all right.”
“ There he goes,” I hollered out,
But the boy ran out of sight.

" He's peekin' there," the p'liceman said,
Then called in a awful tone,
" Just tell that boy that I'm your friend
An' he must let you 'lone."

He kinda smiled, but scared the boy
'Cause he isn't half so rude,
P'licemens never bother folks,
I guess, if they'll be good.

Maggie McCarthy Grows Poetical

SCENE.—MAGGIE'S *kitchen on a Christmas Eve.*

CHARACTERS: MAGGIE, *who tells of the Mistletoe Fairy.*

JOE, *the policeman, who is a willing listener.*

(MAGGIE *talks.*)

Come in, come in, Joe, an' warm up a bit before ye go along on your bate. It's snowin' an' blowin' just like the regular Christmas weather, ain't it now? What, Joe? You've brought me a lovely brush an' comb set! Ain't that the grand thing? An' a box of candy too! We'll open that to onct. Sit down. The folks is gone to a Christmas party at the Cloob. No wan will disturb us. Sure, light yous pipe an' we'll be that cozy. Me gas stove ain't much like an open fireplace in me cabin home over in the ould country, though.

'Tis sivin years since I wint back to see the ould place an' me grandmither was livin' thin, what's dead now, God rist her sowl. Well, Joe, they had the great ould fireplace and a kittle hanging from a crane and it was sure the fireplace made me grandmither think of the story she told me. She was a great wan fer stories, was she.

"Maggie," says she, "this fire we're gazin' into makes me think of me girlhood days. 'Twas just

such a Christmas that Terence O'Grady came to see your great-aunt Mona, a pretty girl was she, the pride of the country round, an' swatehearts she had by the score. Wan Christmas Eve she sat in front of the fire whin the rist of us wint to the midnight sERVICE, at the church. She hurted her foot she claimed, but I'm thinkin' it was that she was hopin' Terence O'Grady would come whin the rist of us was gone."

The Christmas greens was all over the place an' some mistletoe was hangin' on the chimney piece. "Have ye heard of the mistletoe fairy, me child," says me grandmither. "Well, the fairy comes out an' dances at Christmas toime, if there is no wan to see." So Mona was there on the settle and she leans back pritindin' to be aslape an' peekin' out from her half closed eyes. Sure enuf, out comes the fairy from the Christmas greens an' she danced all about the place.

"Slape! Slape! lovely maid," says the fairy wavin' her wand, "an' your true love will come an' waken you with a kiss."

Some wan knocked at the dure an' the fairy disappeared.

Knock! Knock! came again but Mona never moved and kept her eyes shut. Prisintly Terence O'Grady comes crapin' in an' set down on the edge of a chair. For quite a while he waited an' Mona didn't wake up. She was only pritindin'. Tho' her lashes was long an' lovely, Terry wanted to look at her eyes, which was as blue as the sky, so he coughed an' shuffled his fate. Finally Mona opened her eyes, kind of poutin' like.

"I'm sorry I woke you, but 'twas sort of lone-some," says Terry.

"Indade an' I haven't been lonesome," says she.
"I've had coompany."

"Who was the blayguard?" says he, gittin' jillous
in a minute.

"I don't associate wid blayguards," says Mona
stamping her foot.

"Forgive me, Mona," says he, "but who was the
spalpeen?"

"'Twas the mistletoe fairy," says she. "She
waved her wand whin I was slapin' and said me true
love would wake we wid a kiss an' you come
stompin' in wid your clumsy fate. No wonder you
scared the fairy away."

"Oh, the blunderin' craytur I am," wails Terry.
"Don't you feel slapy agin, Mona?" says he.

"A little," says she. Thin she closed her eyes, an'
Terry cript over to the binch an' kissed her awake.
And that's the story me grandmother told me of
me great-aunt Mona and the mistletoe fairy.

What, Joe? Do I believe that? It would be
grond to be kissed awake maybe by your true love
on the blissed Christmas Eve. What, Joe? Am I
slapy? Well, no—but—there's a bit of mistletoe
hangin' under the light above me.

Go along wid you, Joe. What? Well just
onct—well twict,—three times? Yes, three times
you may kiss me—it bein' the blissed Christmas
Eve.

The Girl He Forgot

SCENE.—TONY'S *new fruit store*.

CHARACTERS: TONY.

A REGULAR CUSTOMER.

ROSA.

BEPPO.

(TONY *tells the story to his regular customer*)

You like-a my leetle new-a fruit store? It ees nice. That is my Rosa an' my leetle Beppo. We are verree hap'. Yes, hap' now, but once—well, it ees like-a dees. I leave-a Italee an' come Amereek, on big ship. I tell my sweetheart Rosa I sen' for her when I make-a da mon—much mon—they say in Italee every-a-bod' have much-a-da-mon in Amereek. Well I find not so much-a everything free here as we tink in Italee, so I have hard time—then I get verree poor an' I sing in da street.

One nights a man come say to me—you have one big grand-a fine voice. You come-a with me. You make-a da great big mon like-a Carus'. Then I sing an' sing an' I make-a much-a da mon, but I not send for Rosa. I live in big hotel an' da ladees senda me notes an' da lovely bokay flower. I forget leetle Rosa in Italee. Then one nights I walk out of the-ata to take-a my automobeel an' there stood my Rosa, my leetle Rosa with shawl on her head.

“ My Tony,” she say, an' hold out da arms, but I pass her by with-a my grand ladee with me an' we

drive away. The grand ladee think Rosa somebodee crazee 'bout my voice—somebodee what jus' has what you call mash on me.

I no feel good in my heart when I was 'shamed of my leetle Rosa. She not come again an' then one day I taken seek, verree seek; when I was in hospit' the doctor say I sing no more. My gran' voice like-a Carus', it was gone. When I get better I sit in park an' I weep for my Rosa. What you tink, one day she come along and see me—she was ladee's maid. "You seek, Tony," she say. "You look verree, verree white." Rosa, my little Rosa, that I forgot sat down beside me.

"You have-a da grand-a voice," she say. "In da galleree night after night, I hear you sing."

"I sing no more," I say, "my voice eez gone."

"I am sorree," she say, "but maybe now you will-a love me once more," an' she squeeze my hand much-a hard.

Where were the grand-a ladees? Gone—only my Rosa left-a now.

Yes, then we get marry, me an' my Rosa. We keep-a dees store, an' we have leetle Beppo, an' we are verree hap'. I am glad I can no more sing-a like-a Carus'.

The Drug Clerk

SCENE.—*The Corner Drug Store in a small town.*

CHARACTERS: THE DRUG CLERK.

HIS FRIEND.

(THE CLERK *elucidates, between customers, to his friend.*)

Hello, Norm! Believe me this is my busy day. The boss has gone on a vacation and the soda clerk was taken sick about an hour ago. I'm chief cook and bottle washer. How's every little thing? Here comes a swell dame. Bet she buys a postage stamp. What did I tell you? She blew herself, and took two. Wait a minute. Veils, Miss? No, we don't keep them. There's a dry-goods store in the next block. Yes, I know we keep hair nets—funny? Well, maybe it is, but we don't keep veils. Perhaps we keep hair nets because we have hair tonics and shampoos and things like that. What? Then we ought to have face veils because we keep cold creams? Maybe—but we don't. Sorry, Miss. Good-day.

Whew! Norm, it's the limit the way they'll stand and argue. There's a kid for an ice-cream cone. Six cents. You haven't six cents, only five? Nothing doing, kid, blow! Fade away—What, Norm? You'll treat the kid? That's his regular stunt. Remember, kid, just this time. The next time,—

well, there won't be any next time—you bring the penny.

Cigar, sir? Yes, they have gone up. So has everything.

There's the lighter. Out of order? No, you press this way, see? Say, Norm, there's old Wiseacre. He's a good customer, and you have to treat him all right, but suffering cats!—the old chestnuts he springs. Howdy, Mr. Wiseacre! When did you get back? Lots of fish, eh? Oh, you have a new fish story? My friend Norm here is a fisherman. Tell him—What? Lost one three feet long? Hard luck, I'll say. You went out at daybreak? Yes, yes, I see. Excuse me a minute, there's a customer. Anything, ma'am? Oh, you don't want any one to hear? Something to make you thin? That would be quite a job—I mean we have several preparations but we can't recommend any one in particular. Fakem's Sylph pills? Yes, we have them, \$2.00 a box. Sorry, but that's the price. No, we can't let them go for \$1.98. One box? All right, good-day, ma'am. I hope you'll be successful. Oh, er—no offence—I mean if you want to reduce, I hope you will. You look all right to me. Call again. Reduce! Say, she could take off a hundred and never miss it.

Yes, Mr. Wiseacre, I'm coming. About that fish now, you nearly upset the boat? Great Scott! Pardon me (*Aside to NORMAN, his friend.*) here's a peach coming in for soda. What? You can draw a glass, Norm? Not on your life. I want some joy out of the day.

Pretty warm, Miss, isn't it? Yes, we have all kinds of flavors. What would I suggest? Peach—fresh peach. Why? well—er, just because. You

want cherry—all right, cherry it is. Isn't this a larger dish than usual? Larger than you usually get here? Is that so? That's strange. Maybe I am more athletic than the other fellow and can dig up more ice-cream. Hope you'll like it. It's fine? Thanks. Pardon me a minute. Yes, Mr. Jones, your tonic is all ready. Is it all right? Sure! Sure! The boss put it up before he went away. I could do it all right, but he knows you insist on his doing it. You don't want to take the wrong medicine? I should say not. Is it really all right? Here, I'll show you and take a teaspoonful myself. There, I didn't die, did I? What? Will I allow you for that teaspoonful? Yes—two cents? All right. Good-day.

Whew! Ye Gods! Norm, I wish you had my job. Say, I let the peach go without charging for the soda. I should worry. Yes, Mr. Wiseacre, too bad. I'm so busy. Oh, you told my friend, Norm? Sorry I missed it.

What's that, madam? Why don't the street-cars run? I thought they were running. There! You just missed one. Other side of the street, they stop. Why not this one? I don't know, you'll have to ask the company. You want a glass of water while you wait? Certainly. Have I the morning paper? Yes, ma'am, here it is.

How do you do, ma'am? What's that? Do I carry Fixem's face renewer? No. Best in the market? You use it? I thought so—I mean—no, no—no offence. Want me to carry it? The boss isn't here. Leave sample? Well, I don't think it will do any good. Oh, I'm not knocking your cream. I mean the boss probably won't try a new line.

Good-day, sir. Something to make your hair grow? Here's a whole row of sure things. This is popular—"Death to the bald head." Well, it is rather a ferocious name, but somehow it sells. One bottle—yes,—good-day.

Oh, Norm, must you go? Wiseacre has gone now, you're afraid some other old bore might drop in? Well, so long, old man. Any time you want my job, give me the tip. This is the life. Talk about exercise. This would keep a baseball champ in training.

The Balloon Man

The balloon man came with gay balloons,
Of green and red and blue,
And blew his horn, then we chil'ren teased,
"Oh Mother, just one or two!"

We shrieked with joy as we saw them float,
Away up in the air.
All of a sudden one bursted loud!
Then—it wasn't anywhere.

"Oh Mother—where did the red one go?"
She smiled an' shooked her head;
But Grandmamma said with a queer little sigh,
"It went like the dreams of youth gone by;
Here with its hope and its glowing red
For a moment—then gone forever," she said.

I didn't understand her at all
But I guess it's just 'cause I am so small.

Mandy and the Vampire

SCENE.—MANDY'S *kitchen*.

CHARACTERS: MANDY.

HER FRIEND, LIZA JOHNSING.

(MANDY *talks of Vampires.*)

Tell you what, Liza Johnsing, dey is all sorts of ways of skinning a cat. What am I cogitatin' 'bout? Well, 'bout ole Mose an' the vampire. When you goes to the movies you gits 'quainted wid de pus-sonal appearance and ways of vampireses. You know Mose was allus a harmless critter. Cose he wa'n't nevah over-fond of wuk, but he was a kind of a house fixture lak a stove or a cheer, an' I got so use to havin' him roun' that it wouldn't seem natural 'thout his ugly black mug in the cornah.

You know Mose set roun' so much, he was lak a ole settin' hen, but all to onct he commence to go out nights an' look lak he was tryin' to spruce up.

"What you wearin' yo' Sunday suit to-night fur?" I say, one evenin'. "Whar you gwine?"

"Oh, jes' to a meetin'," he say.

"What kin' of a meetin'?" I axes.

"Church meetin'—de preachah axes me."

I thought 'twas kin' of queer, Liza, but I'd been washing all day and I was tired an' so I didn't say no mo'! I didn't git really 'spicious, tho' he kep' axin' me for quarterses an' half dollarses fer this an' fer that. I say, I didn't git really 'spicious

twell I seen his haid one night, an' Lawd save us, ef he hadn't had all de kinks taken out his wool.

"You ole fool," I says, "what's the mattah wid you?"

"Nothin', Mandy, nothin', I allus hated dem kinks."

Well, I kept mah brain a wukin' an' one night when he went out mekin' some "flim-flam" excuse, I follererd him. You b'lieve me, Liza Johnsing, ef that black rascal didn't meet that fool critter Lilly Bell Mason at de cornah—she wo' a red georgette waist and a black an' white stripe skirt an' white shoes an' stockings. She was switchin' her dress an' lookin' up into dat ole Monkey Mose's eyes an' he war lookin' at her like a dyin' calf.

Fust, I was gwine to grab her by de wool an' tear off her clothes an' then I thought I'd jes' wait.

They went into a ice-cream parlah an' he was feedin' her face wid ice-cream, wid my money, an' actin' like she was doin' him a favor to eat. I let things go on fur a while, Liza, twell I make up my mind.

One night, I went ovah to Lilly Bell Mason's house. She looked kind of skeered when she see me but she 'vited me in.

"I come see you 'bout Mose, Lilly Bell Mason," I say.

"What 'bout Mose?" she say, kind of peart.

"You is been runnin' round to movies an' ice-cream pahlahs wid him an' vampin' him, ain't you?"

"No, I ain't no vamp," she say, tossin' her haid. "I can't he'p it if I'se 'tractive to de men."

"He'p it, I don't want you to he'p it. I come roun' heah to mek a bargain with you—you's a widder, ain't you?" "Yes, I is," she say.

"Well, I'm gwine to give you Mose." "What," she cry.

"Sho!" I answer. "I'm glad to get red of him—he de most shiftless, onery, good fer nothin' piece of trash in the shape of a man I ever see. I'm mighty glad to have you take him offen mah hands."

"I ain't gwine tek him offen yo' hands," she say, stampin' her foot.

"Oh yes, you is," I answers. "Think I'm gwine to furnish money for yo' movies an' sodas. Furnish it yo'se'f. You has a good job as a wa'tress in a res'trant an' Mose kin set at yo' fireside. I'm tired lookin' at de ole fool anyway."

"Yo' ain't gwine to push yo' leavin's off on me," she say.

"Yes, I is. I'se bigger'n yo' is an' youse gwine to sign dis heah papah to marry Mose when I deevoses him."

Well, Liza, she went down on her knees an' beg an' cry an' say she nevah look at Mose agin an' finally I went away after skeerin' dat vampire most to deaf.

I did Mose de same way, an' when he see he was gwine to lose his home he wo' his ole knees out beggin' to stay.

Has I a fireside companion now, Liza?

Say, dat ole Mose wouldn't move a inch away from de cornah 'thout axin' me. He know whar his meal tickets comes from an' he ain't flyin' round wid no more vamps. Lawd save us, Liza, I has to bust laffin' when I think of it.

George Is Some Little Fixer

SCENE.—GEORGE'S *back yard*.

CHARACTERS: GEORGE.

HIS FRIEND.

(GEORGE *tells how he arranged matters.*)

My sister gradu-witted the other night. Pa says he hopes she'll know more'n Bill Burns' big brother who just got out of collidge, 'cause if she didn't, Pa said, she wouldn't have no brains at all. Pa says if that Burns boy knew as much as he thinks he does, he'd be top heavy an' have to walk on his head. I guess Pa ain't got no use for Bill's brother, but my sister has. She says Pa's old fashioned an' don't know style when he sees it, an' that tight-waisted coats with belts an' green hats is very "kertische" she calls it. Pa laffed hisself sick at the green hat, an' said it was jest the right culler. Sis was mad but she didn't show it much, 'cause she wanted a wrist watch fur a gradu-wittin' present, an' so choked down her madness like they do in the movies, but I bet she near choked to death doin' it. All the same she got the watch an' a new white dress what Pa said he couldn't afford, with everything costin' what it does, but Ma said she wouldn't have her daughter lookin' like a rag bag an' Sis was the swellest one that finished. Pa said it was his finish too.

Well, me an' Bob Miller was to carry in the

flowers to the girls what was gettin' finished an' we saw that some of 'em was going to get lots of flowers, an' some none a-tall, so Bob Miller says to me, "That ain't fair, is it?" An' I says, "Naw—not on your life it ain't."

"What'll we do?" says Bob. "I gotta plan," says I. "Let's count all the girls an' divide up the bookays, an' give each girl one."

So while they was all listenin' to the essays, we fixed up the flowers, an' before folks got on to it, the bookays was all gave out. We didn't want to hear them essays anyhow. I heard Sis readin' hers at home, about the great wide, wide world, and the real meanin' of life; an' it made me sick.

I noticed one old man was asleep in the front row and I bet he was the happiest man there.

Well, about the flowers. There was a poor girl what hadn't none, an' she had on a wash dress that wasn't very new an' I wisht you could a saw her face when she got the flowers an' thought somebody had remembered her.

Sis was huffy when she got Bill Burns' brother's bookay. You see we divided it with one Herb Robbins sent her, a little one 'cause Herb's workin' his way through the medical collidge an' ain't got much money. He's got a crush on Sis too, an' he's good lookin' an' he gives me a ice-cream cone sometimes when I go into the drug store where he works nights.

Pa likes him too, 'cause he says he don't lean on his Pa like Bill Burns' brother does, an' that Bill Burns' brother won't amount to much. But Ma thinks Bill Burns' brother is more classy than Herb, 'cause his Pa's a banker.

Anyhow Sis give Bill's brother the stony stare

after gradu-wittin', but course he didn't know 'twas about the little bookay an' Sis was too proud to explain, an' let Herb Robbins walk home with her; an' later I saw them settin' in the hammock together.

Bob Miller seen 'em too. He don't like Bill Burns nor his brother neither; so he says to me, "George, me an' you is some little fixers, ain't we?" an' I says, "Sure Mike, we is some little valentine cupids, that's what we are. Hurray for us, Bob," and Bob agreed with me.

The Sea-Shell's Message

I listened to the murmuring
Of the pink sea-shell.
A message it brought from my laddie to me,
My laddie brave far over the sea.
In a sighing sound like the ocean's swell
The words came as music to my ear
So softly that no one else might hear
"I love you," the song of the little pink shell.

Buying Rugs

SCENE.—*Rug Department of a large furniture house.*

CHARACTERS: PATIENT SALESMAN *on a warm day.*
A YOUNG UP-TO-DATE CUSTOMER.
HER FRIEND, EDITH.

(MISS UP-TO-DATE *chatters.*)

Yes, please, I would like to look at some rugs. What sort? Well, different kinds. Would you get Oriental rugs, Edith? Like them? You do? Yes, please—some Oriental rugs. What size? Why—er—nine by twelve? Do you mean feet or inches? Oh, feet? Let's see some a little smaller. My, those are lovely! That dark one especially. Would you have the drawing-room dark, Edith? Let's see some lighter ones. Blue and yellow? Do you like blue and yellow, Edith? Um—show me some others. How much is that one? \$500. W-e-1-1—let's see some less expensive ones. Domestic? That sounds rather nice and homelike. That blue and gray one is charming. Oh, Edith, here is one almost a lavender. That is darling, but I wanted my bedroom in lavender—it might be in pink though. Do you think pink would be most attractive, Edith? Show me some pink bedroom rugs, please. That's

a dream. The dining-room too, I almost forgot that. I think I'd like that in yellow. Oh, too light? Well, let me see a brown one—a sort of tan color. Edith, would you like the dining table in dark English oak, or mahogany? And Edith, wouldn't a white enamelled bedroom set be just too adorable—or do you like mahogany better—a four poster?

The gray with painted flowers are cute, don't you think? My, isn't it hard to decide? What, salesman? Rugs? Oh yes, indeed, we want to see them, but then one has to have everything blend. The furniture must be just right, you know.

Edith, would you have water colors or engravings? Bess Winters has the cutest home. Lots of black and white; and that is striking, don't you think? What, salesman, do I want to see rugs? Why, of course, that's what we came for, to see rugs—you might take down some smaller lots for scattered pieces here and there.

But you know, Edith, I can have a better home than Bess, because Tom has plenty of money. Don't you adore my ring? It's twice as big as Bess's. Every one was so surprised last night. What, salesman? Rugs? Oh yes, that's a pretty one, Edith, and this one too. Oh dear, I've seen so many and such a lot of colors, I'm all bewildered!

Well, salesman, I tell you what I'll do—just give me your card. Thank you. I really can't decide now. It is so warm. I only announced my engagement last night and I don't expect to be married right away, but one likes to be prepared and to know what to select when one goes to housekeeping.

Quite warm to-day, isn't it? I'll keep your card, so that I will know for whom to call when I buy my rugs. Good-afternoon.

Oh, Edith, do let's get a sundae! I'm melted. Such lots and lots of rugs! They made me warm just to look at them. It's hard work picking out rugs, isn't it? I don't believe I will go to that salesman after all because he looked rather annoyed, I thought, didn't you, Edith? But it is fun to shop for a house, isn't it? I'm going everywhere and take plenty of time, wouldn't you?

Lucindy Jones and the City Folks

SCENE.—MARIA MOSELY'S *sitting-room*.

CHARACTERS: LUCINDY JONES.

MARIA MOSELY.

(LUCINDY *sputters*.)

Land sakes, Maria Mosely, if I ain't glad to git 'ome! Talk about vacations! One is more wore out goin' to the city than stayin' home. Fust place, I'm kinda nervous, an' I lost my ticket. When the conductor come 'round, I hunted fust in my handbag, tuck everything out, then in my suitcase, an' the conductor looked kinder mad an' said he'd come back. Well, I even looked through my lunch box, an' a little dog what a woman had jumped up an' et some of my sandwiches.

"Oh dear," she shrieked, "Tootsy will be sick. She never eats anything but dog biscuits."

"I wisht she would git sick eatin' my sandwiches," I said, kinder cross.

"You heartless critter," she cried. "Come to mother, my ownie baby Tootsy," she said to the dog, kissin' it.

Ain't some women sicknin', Maria? Then the conductor come again, but I hadn't found the ticket.

"Have to put you off, if you hain't got one," he says.

"I have," I says; "it's here sumwhers."

"I think she's a dead beat," the woman with the dog says with a sniff.

"Look here," I says, "I'm a ree-spektable woman livin' at Poky Corners, bee-longin' to the Fust Baptis' Chu'ch, an' the Wimmen's Ixil'ry of the Modern Woodmans, an' I kin reefer to any number of pus-sons as to my charackter."

I guess that squelched her, Maria, bekuz she shet up then an' I found my ticket jest that minute. I'd stuck it in my glove to be sure to have it handy.

I suttinly felt ree-lieved. At last I got to the city. Me an' Myrtle went shoppin', an', land, the way the wimmen dress, short dresses an' furs in summer. It do beat everything. There was some pretty clothes too. A weddin' dress on a wax bride in the winder made me think of the time I helped make the weddin' dress fer Cory Davis' girl Nell.

Don't you never breathe this, Maria, but this is what I done. They say if you sew one of your curls in the hem of a weddin' dress, you'll soon be a bride yourself. I ain't got much hair, an' it ain't curly, so I cut a good bit off my switch, my best one, hair costin' a lot too, an' sewed it all round in the hem, but it didn't do no good. That was ten year ago an' I ain't married yit, so I don't believe in them fables an' signs no more.

I had another accident on the train. I put my false teeth on a clean paper beside me on the seat, because they're kinder new an' I got clear off the car when I missed 'em.

Dear me, suz, but I was skeered. I jumped back on the train then pulled the bell cord, stoppin' the whole works. The conductor was mad as a hatter, but the porter grinned an' helped me off, an' I give

him a nickel. You have to. Tippin' costs a lot when you're travellin'.

Speakin' of the city, it sure is a queer place these days. Old men with bald heads and red faces and stummicks as big as Hank Perkinses', go totterin' round with the young girls, an' there ain't no old women, they all dress like sixteen; some of 'em as old as Granny Pettibone, honest to goodness, Maria.

Looks queer to me. I guess I'm kinder old-fashioned. Some of your country folks tries to be awful stylish, but I ain't that kind. Well, I had a good time though, an' let me tell you another thing that happened to me.

Me an' Myrtle Busby was in a store, an' she was lookin' at some ribbons, an' I was near the handkerchiefs when I see a woman helpin' herself to 'em. Thinking it might be some kind of advertisement an' they was free I commenced to pick up some myself.

"Could you spare me a piece of paper to wrap these in?" I says to the clerk.

"Yes, where's your money?" says she.

"Money!" I says. "I thought you was givin' 'em away, because this woman next to me has her pockets an' waist full of handkerchiefs."

"How dare you?" the woman says, glaring at me, an' then we recognized each other. Would you believe me, Maria, 'twas the woman in the train with the dog, an' sure enough they searched her; her kickin' all the time. She was one of them shoplifters, they said, an' she had the dog with her, an' the dog's blanket was filled with gloves and handkerchiefs. I didn't know her, at fust, seein' other wimmen with dogs, too.

When the perliceman was takin' her away, I couldn't resist sayin', "Would you like to have our Fust Baptist Ch'ch preacher come to the jail an' talk with you? An' be sure to tell 'em not to give your Tootsy sandwiches."

My, but she was mad!—bustin' mad! With all the things I've told you, I ain't told you what happened when I was waitin' in the depot fer Myrtle, when I fust got to the city. A woman come to me an' says, "Would you hold my baby while I git a drink?" An' I says "suttinly," but she musta gone a long ways fer a drink fer she didn't come back, an' Myrtle had to call a perliceman, an' turn the baby over to him. They sure kin think of queer things in town.

I might have kept that baby, 'twas real cute—but it would look kinder queer comin' home with a baby an' me not married.

Well, I guess, Maria, I'll stay home now fer quite a spell. The ways of the city is sure peculiar.

The Love Bug in Our Office

SCENE.—*The office of Mr. Morrison, the boss.*

CHARACTERS: THE BOSS.

THE OFFICE FORCE.

(*The young office girl tells of the love bug.*)

Say, Ethel, did you ever get stung by the love bug? Well, it's been buzzing around our office all right. There we were as nice and cozy a little office as you ever saw. The boss was a bachelor, a confirmed one, and so were the two bookkeepers, and the cashier was a regular spinster. I was the only young one there but the office boy. Well, the stenographer isn't old, but then she isn't nineteen by a long shot, either.

First the head bookkeeper asked for a day off next week and the boss said he couldn't spare him because it was our busiest time; but the head bookkeeper said he had to go, because he was going to get married.

"Good Heavens!" said the boss. "At your age?" "I am only thirty-five," said the head bookkeeper.

"Old enough to have sense," growled the boss. "Well, go ahead, take a week's vacation. When a man gets loony, he has to have time to reflect."

The boss seemed sort of fussed, but he went on

dictating to the stenog. Then he noticed a ring on her finger.

"You don't mean," he began; and then I guess he thought he was getting personal, so he stopped, but she laughed and said, "Yes, I am going to be married next month."

Say, Ethel, you could have knocked him over with a feather.

"I never get a good stenographer but she gets foolish and spoils a career by getting married," he said.

The assistant bookkeeper came in from his vacation just then.

"May I see you when you're at leisure, Mr. Morrison?" he asked.

"Don't tell me you're going to get married," snapped the boss.

"No," says the assistant bookkeeper, "because I'm married already, married while I was on my vacation, and I want to give you two weeks' notice. My wife's folks have a bank in Crest City and I am going to work there."

"This office has gone crazy," said the boss, "plumb nutty. How about you?" he growled at the cashier. Well, she got sort of red, Ethel.

"I'm going to marry a preacher," she began. "What?" interrupted the boss. "Worse and more of it! They even marry the preachers instead of having the preachers marry them. I'm disgusted with the bunch. I thought you were all old enough to know better. The next set I hire will be Methusalehs. Are you married, too?" he snapped at me.

"No," said I, "but I would like a vacation because I am going to marry the head bookkeeper."

"Oh, say!" he cried. "This is too much—where's the office boy? Come in here, Red—are you married?"

"Married, hully gee no—but I gotta goil," he answered with a grin, sliding out into the outer office.

"By Jiminy!" the boss said, "I guess I can have a hand at this myself," and he grabbed the telephone.

"Hello, Central! Give me Winton 4250. Is this you, Kate? Say, Kate, will you marry me? Wanted to ask you for some time. All right, when? Tonight? You will? I'll be right over and make arrangements. Good-bye.

"There, now, everybody, this office is closed for two weeks. Good-day," and he grabbed his hat and was gone. That's just like the boss. So, Ethel, look out for the love bug. What? You want a job in our office when we open up again? All right—I'll speak to the boss—Good luck.

My Little Sweetheart Ana

(A tale of the Pacific and the Zoneland.)

Yes, this is a wonderful view with the bay far below.
The palms are like sentinels.
The bougainvilla vines climb over the porch
With the Glory of their gorgeous red blossoms.
Do I live here all the time? Yes.
Lonely? no—there are my pigeons.
Want to see them?
We will climb up to the top of the hill.
Here—Sweetheart—Baby—King—Alphonso—
They know me. Are they not lovely things?
Messages they carried during the war.
Sometimes I send them now to the mainland.
This little tin holds the message.
See, I let them out for a recreation,
No—they will not fly away.
They will come back at the ringing of the bell.
You wonder I am contented here
On this Island in the Pacific.
I am a college man, yes, but well—
I was a disappointment to my father.
Sit down, friend, and have a cigarette.
The old tale of a harsh, stern father,
Who did not understand.
I wanted to be an artist.
He laughed me to scorn
And sent me to a Government job
Down here in the Zone.

The long stretches of eternal heat
Got me, and I came to the island here to rest.
The lure of the place is in my blood.
I do not care to go away.
An old man taught me to train the pigeons,
And when he died, left them to me.
They were useful in the war time.
I enlisted, but they kept me here.
Not much of a story, is it?
There was a girl in the States,
A rich girl—my father tried to force a marriage.
That was one reason I was glad to get away.
Ah!—now that I am talking, friend,
I will make a clean breast of it all.
There was another girl—a girl of the Island,
A little Panamanian beauty.
I used to sketch her.
Her skin was fair, almost white.
Her eyes—black—soft, velvety,
Mysterious as the shadows of the night.
One day as she leaned against a palm tree
I kissed her, then I knew
That for me there could never be another.
She was like a sprite—a bit of thistle-down.
On fête days, she wore a lace mantilla,
Dancing with fascinating grace
To the click of the castanet.
Sometimes we went across the Bay
To the City of Panama
Wandering through the narrow streets
Down to the sea wall,
Or listened to the band
In the Cathedral Plaza;
Mingling with the care-free crowds
That sauntered there.

I was happiest when we were alone, we two.
She seemed a dainty child, my sweetheart Ana.
A picture of her, I painted
With the pigeons all about her.
Then there came a change.
She faded like a flower.
Suddenly she grew pale, distract,
There was a man of her own race, Enrique Sosa,
With a great ranch on the mainland.
She must marry him, her people said,
For they were poor.
I went to the pigeon house
On the mainland, one day,
One of my pigeons came with a message
"Come, I am in danger, Your sweetheart Ana,"
Were the words in Spanish.
I hastened by the late boat,
But she had gone.
Her people knew nothing, they said.
I told them that they lied.
Later I found her, dead.
To his ranch Enrique Sosa had carried her.
She was to be a prisoner
Until she promised to be his bride.
And so she killed herself
Poor little sweetheart Ana.
We fought, Enrique and I,
Almost unto the death.
This little scar across my cheek
Is his loving gift to me.
Then he went away.
The wound healed in my cheek, but in my heart
The scars are there.
Down in the graveyard is a cross.
She lies in a quiet place, my love.

Night and morning, I go to stand beside her.
Well, such is life!
My pigeons, I must call them in.
This one is Sweetheart.
She brought me the message from my love.
What do you say, friend?
Was it my picture that made the stir
At the Salon last year—
“The girl and the pigeons?”
Yes—Proud? Why? Nothing matters any more.
Now you know why I stay on this island.
My little sweetheart Ana is here.
I shall never go away.

Mammy Liza Tells of Mr. Adam and Miss Eve

SCENE.—MAMMY's cabin at the close of the day.

CHARACTERS: MAMMY LIZA, who wants to rest
and smoke her pipe.

THE CHILLEN, who want to hear a
story.

(MAMMY talks.)

Clar out of heah, you imps of Satan! Go on!
Heah me? A story? I'll story you! Jes' let me
set down to res' my weary bones an' you all comes
a hangin' roun' like a lot of pertifinous miskeeters.
Never seed sech a mess of chillens in all mah bawn
days. What? You want to heah 'bout Mistah
Adam an' Mis' Eve? How many times you want
me tell you 'bout dat story? Set down. You am
like de plegs of Egyp'.

One story, 'member. If you axes fer mo' dah's
mah ole lether strop hangin' mighty handy.

Well, Mistah Adam was de fus' man—Too bad de
notion come to de Lawd to mek a man at all—the
good-fer-nothin' critters, but it did. Parumdisse was
a lubly garden with flowers an' watermillions an' no
weeds ner nothin' obstreperous an' jes' cool enuf
an' jes' hot enuf. I spec' de Lawd he say to hisself:

“I mek all dem animals, somebody got to keer
fer 'em an' name 'em,” an' he mek Mistah Adam

outen some clay. Most men acks like dey was made of dirt, dey sho do.

Mistah Adam look aroun' an' he say "Um—um! Dis sho am a pretty place I got into," an' he had a lot of fun namin' the animulses, de rhinosiciferusses, and de zebrims, an' de lionses an' elefunts, and de cheribeems, an' de seryfeems. How come he think of all dem names do beat me, but that wasn't their names in de fust place, case dem names what he give was changed, I reckon. He hadn't met up wid Miss Eve then and she suttinly changed ev'ything.

One day he went to sleep. Eatin' an' sleepin' is what men does best in the worl', an' Mistah Adam begun de laziness.

De Lawd saw dat man sleepin', an' he say:

"Dat man I made am a putty good sort of pussen, but I believe I kin do better'n than him. I kin improve on him."

So he made Miss Eve outen one of Mistah Adam's ribs. When Mistah Adam woke up his side pained like de toothache you had de othah day. Andrew Jackson—stop yo' snivelling. It don't hurt you now. Ef you snivels, I'll give you sumpin to cry fur.

Well, Mistah Adam look up an' dah stood his rib in the shape of Miss Eve. An' he soon forgot de pain.

"Fo' pity's sake," he say to hisse'f, "ain't she good-lookin'!" An' Miss Eve smile an' Mistah Adam lose his heart too, as well as his rib.

"Will you take a walk?" he axes her and when she consent dey stroll all roun' pickin' free bokays an' eatin' free fruit. Everything was free kase nobody didn't need no money them days.

He showed her all de animules, an' course she changed all de names, kase women is kinder changeable, an' two heads is better'n one, anyway.

One day Miss Eve and Mistah Adam was a strollin' roun' an' Miss Eve see a new kind of tree.

"Oh, ain't that a pretty tree? Climb up an' git me some fruit," she say.

"No, no," say Mistah Adam. "We ain't 'lowed to tech that tree."

"For why?" say Miss Eve.

"Jes' kase we ain't. Dat am a apple tree. We kin have all sorts of fruit, but appleses."

"I ax again, for why?" she say.

"I don' know," say Mistah Adam, "that's orders."

The mo' Miss Eve look, the mo' she was bustin' wid curiositum an' the hungrier she got. Well, they walk away, but she come back alone and gaze up in the apple tree.

"They's somethin' 'bout them appleses," she say to herself, "looks better an' mo' appetitious than nothin' else in dis heah garden. Wondah why we can't tech 'em?"

Pretty soon she heah somethin' go "Hiss! Hiss!" an' up in the tree was a big snake, but she wa'n't skeered kase she was pussonally acquainted with him, havin' named him to suit herse'f.

"Ain't them pretty appleses?" say Mr. Snake, kind of soft-like. "Does you want one or two?"

"They sho' looks appetizin'," say Miss Eve, sighin' an' shakin' her haid.

"They is de very fines' fruit in dis heah whole garden," say Mr. Snake. "Take one."

Miss Eve put her han's behin' her. "No, I can't kase I ain't 'lowed," she say slowly.

"They is simply delicius," say Mr. Snake, chawin' on one.

"Hum! Hum!" Miss Eve sighed. "I might take a teeny weenty little one," an' Mr. Snake give her one quick.

"My! That look good," she say, holdin' it.

"Take a bite," say Mr. Snake, an' she bit, an' she bit—twell the apple was most et up, when along come Mistah Adam.

"Take some," she say, holdin' de apple to Mistah Adam. Fust he say no, but she look so pretty, holdin' out the apple, an' then I spec he say to hisse'f, "Well, I came heah in the garden fus'. I reckon I kin eat a apple if she kin," and so he et some too.

Bimeby there was a gret noise, an' ole Mistah Snake was laffin' to hisse'f, but he got out de way when he heard de noise, an' Mistah Adam, when he got caught, blame it all on Miss Eve, jest like a onery man, an' they got put out of the garden quick, out in the desert, an' had to go to wuk buildin' a house; an' Miss Eve had to take in washin', I reckon.

"Now jes' see what you did?" says Mistah Adam.

"I don't keer," say Miss Eve, "appleses is mighty good an' what would the apple pies and apple sass be if nobody never et appleses de fust time?"

Go on now, clar out, you imps, kase I got to make a apple pie mahse'f fer suppah when I gits a res'.

A Yank's Proposal in France

Say, Kiddo, you are pretty and sweet,
Oh, I forgot, you can't understand.
Let's see what the book says, "Joli and sucre"
You are "sucré" to beat the band.

I'm stuck on you, kid, I *aimez vous* lots.
You're tout suite, great, belle and then some,
(She looks sort of blank—she don't get me at all)
My *parlez Fransy* is sure on the bum.

Will you marry me, kid, I mean get spliced, mar-
ree?
(She's sore, she thinks I mean Marie.)
When a girl's pretty as that, she should know
how to talk.
All you need say, dear, is only "Oui Oui."

My heart, kid—*mon cœur*—cur—that sounds like
a pup,
This proposal will take me a week.
(She is smiling, she's on.) Let's throw down the
book,
It's my arm round your waist, kid, will speak.

To a Friend

What a wonderful thing in this world of ours
To have a friend like you
Who knows, and cares, and understands,
And who is always tender and true.
The careless ones may pass us by,
Heeding not the tear nor the sigh.
Our lives are bound with a blessed tie
To the friend who is just like you.

Maggie McCarthy's Cousin Teresa

SCENE.—MAGGIE'S *kitchen*.

CHARACTERS: MAGGIE McCARTHY.
HER FRIENDS.

(MAGGIE *tells the romantic story of her COUSIN TERESA.*)

Well, girls, come on in! I am sure glad to see ye. The folks is away an' we'll hav a spread. I hav some news for ye. Ye know me Cousin Teresa—well, Teresa is goin' to be married an' it's a interestin' story. You see Teresa worked at wan of thim grand houses on the Drive, where they have iligant rugs an' marble statoos, paintin's, an' a barrel of books, an' a wonderful sun parlor, all cretonne an' cane sates an' palms an' everything.

The young missus where she worked was allus doin' things to entertain the sailor byes, or some societies, or poor childer an' things like that; up-liftin' she called it, tho' Teresa said it was tiresome sort of stuff. Well, this partickele avenin' there was sailor byes, an' some soldiers, an' a man gave 'em a long talk on patriotism an' some of 'em was most aslape.

Thin a long-haired spaghetti singer sang some dago songs in a queer language. Thin a tall, scrawny lady gave a child piece, an' a little gurl gave some drammer that some one said was Shakespeare, tho' who that was I don't know mesilf. A mon in

tights an' a few draperies that Teresa said made her blush fer him, danced in his bare fate, a wild crazy dance, an' Teresa heard wan of the sailor byes say in a whisper, "Kill it!" "Shut up, Shorty, you hick," says another wan, pokin' the first wan in the ribs, "ain't you got no manners?"

"I'd ruther go out an' talk with the chofer," says the first wan they called Shorty. "We'll get tea an' sissy cakes an' that's all."

Sure as ye live, gurls, that's what they fed him husky byes on, tea an' wafers. Yer see the butler was sick an' that's how Teresa come to be standin' round assistin'. Whin all to onct she seen an Irish Gob she knew. Well, to go back to the rale beginnin' of the story, gurls, it sames that on Peace night, some months before, whin the whole town an', I guess, the whole world wint wild, Teresa was waitin' for her mistress in the limousine, she havin' gone into an office buildin' fer the master. Iverybody was actin' crazy like, singin', and dancin', an' throwin' confetti, whin along comes a gob.

Teresa had put her mistress' fur cape around her, feelin' chilly, an' to see how it fit so fine an' soft like—whin all of a suddin, bein' filled with the joy an' fun of the moment, she jumps out an' grabbed the sailor bye an' commences to dance. Thin seein' the chofer comin' from the corner where he'd gone to git some cigarettes, she pushed the gob away, jumped in the machine, an' wint across the strate to git her mistress.

Niver had she laid eyes on the gob agin from that night, an' here now sure he was that same one she had danced with in the strate.

Even with her cap an' apron on the gob knew her, an' was gazin' intranced like. Whin she wint

into the hall, she beckoned him to slip out whin the spaghetti was singin' agin.

"I've looked everywhere for ye," he said. "I thought ——"

"Thot I was a swell dame an' a grond lady in my limousine and fur cape," says Teresa laughin'.

"You've got them dames in there skinned a mile fer looks," says he.

Thin she explained it all to him.

"Glory be!" says he. "I thought you were way above me, but I'm some little sub-chaser and I've hunted the town fer you. That's why I've come to all these swell shindigs at these grand houses, hopin' to see you. May I hope to see you many times—er—I don't know your name ——"

"Teresa," says she.

"Teresa," says he, "may I continue hopin' to see you agin?"

Sure he continued, an' that's the story of me Cousin Teresa an' the sailor bye. They are to be married nixt wake an' he's the foine Irish lad by the name of Michael.

Ain't that the romance for ye? Here comes Joe, the Polacemon. I must hurry up wid the eats.

The Tin Pan Brigade

SCENE.—*A cafeteria at the busy hour.*

CHARACTERS: A GIRL.

HER FRIEND.

(*The GIRL chatters.*)

Come on, let's join the tin pan brigade, Pearl. Get your waiter. Don't forget the fork, knife and spoon. Here are the napkins. Do you want bread? Let's have some rolls. Sweet rolls? Or plain? Plain, I guess, don't you think? Soup? Yes—er—no, I think not. Here's meat. What kind do you want? Say, Pearl, this looks good—what is it? Oh, chop suey—I'll take some—I guess—no, wait a minute—don't serve me please till I make up my mind. I don't know yet what I want. Isn't she the snippy thing, Pearl? She said it was about time. Please don't crowd so back of me. What did that serving girl say, Pearl? That I'd have to decide? Well, I guess I won't eat what I don't want just to please her.

Would you like ham, Pearl? This chicken looks good. Mercy, sixty cents! Well, roast beef—no, no—I think I won't take meat at all. Did you hear that girl behind us, Pearl? She said she wished that cheap skate would move on. One can't afford to notice vulgar common people, Pearl. There! I said that loud enough for her to hear.

I'll have macaroni, I think, yes, please; what do you want, Pearl? Fish and egg sauce. That does look nice. I'll have that too, please. Take this macaroni off my plate. I want fish instead. Isn't that server the cranky creature, Pearl? Do you want vegetables with your fish? Let's have corn—Oh no, that's too expensive. We'll have string beans. I don't like them very well, but they are fairly cheap. Don't take potatoes, Pearl, they'll make you fat.

What's this? Strawberry kisses, the girl calls them. They look good. Twenty-five cents each. Heavens! Too much. Here's pie, only fifteen cents.

Don't crowd so behind me, please. Wish we'd hurry?—well, we have to wait until the food is put upon our trays. These are dreadfully rude people to-day, Pearl. Do you want tea or coffee? I like coffee but—I guess I'll take tea. I forgot about milk. Please take the tea off of my tray, I prefer milk—Oh, it does make you fat, that's so, Pearl. Please give me back the tea. I'll take that after all.

I never saw such cross girls as they have to wait on you here. Everybody was cross to-day. Our boss nearly tore the office down and bawled out the boy, or commenced to and then thought better of it. Boys are so independent nowadays. It was lucky the boss's wife dropped in so he could let out on her all right. She must be used to it, poor thing. What's that? Am I going to stand here all day? I guess I can take time to decide whether I want a piece of lemon pie or not. Isn't that the freshest girl behind us, Pearl?

Let's find a table—Oh, the checker, yes—say, that check is too much—What? Count it? Um—I

guess that's all right. Here's a table in the corner. Pshaw! Those girls took that just because we wanted it.

I don't want to sit down with that old man. He has long whiskers and I hate them. Here, Pearl. What? You got here first? You certainly did not, ma'am.

Sit down, Pearl, look how furious that woman is. My goodness! You have to keep fighting every minute for your rights in this world. I'll say you do, Pearl.

A Chinese Dinner

CHARACTERS: THE SPEAKER.
ESTELLE, *her friend.*

(*A monologue to ESTELLE.*)

Oh, my dear Estelle, I just ran over to tell you of the delectable Chinese dinner we had last evening—a ceremonial dinner with a lot of queer things to eat. One could not tell what half of it was. I simply adore unique affairs, and I finally prevailed upon John to go with me.

You know he said, "Never Again," after the Free Verse Poetry evening at the Poet's Club.

Well, I cried a little and said I never could go anywhere and that other women's husbands went with them, and that I might as well be a widow or a spinster for all the escort I had and so he grumbled but finally gave in.

When he was dressing he swore dreadfully, but it was under his breath, and I pretended that I couldn't hear from where I sat in the parlor.

We went to an odd Chinese-looking café right in the Chinese quarter. It was their New Year, and all sorts of good luck signs in Chinese character were hanging about. John said they were laundry signs.

The Writers' Club was giving the dinner to a celebrated author who had just returned from the

Orient, and to a native General or somebody. All sorts of interesting, long-haired and short-haired people were there, artists and authors, people who looked wise and were stupid, and people who looked stupid and were wise. John said every one was "batty," including himself, for being there at all. John uses such coarse, cheap slang sometimes. He does not care for high-brow things, as he calls them—never reads much but the daily papers or the *Friday Evening Post*, or some horrid detective stories, so you see, Estelle, it is hard for him to get into a rarefied literary atmosphere.

We sat at round tables and had all kinds of little saucers, some chop-sticks and one china spoon. John balked at the chop-sticks and used the china spoon for everything. There were all sorts of dishes, one vegetable, or was it a vegetable? Well, anyhow, John insisted it was chopped sponges. "They catch these young and cook them. The old ones they wash with," John grunted disgustedly. My efforts to keep him quiet were useless. He was like an unruly small boy.

"We can cook beans all around these Chinks," he blurted out again.

"John, for pity's sake, hush! Those are not beans, they are lotus buds," I whispered, giving his foot a kick under the table. It was all to no purpose.

"Lotus buds!" he exclaimed. "Ye Gods! Tomorrow I suppose I'll wake up feeling like a pond lily."

The noted speaker of the evening assured us that one liked these dishes when one got used to them, and that his eyes filled with tears when he left China and thought of leaving some favorite dish.

"The whole bunch of waiters must have wept into those beans, by the looks of that gravy," John put in, sampling another dish.

A young man at the table who seemed to have a fellow feeling for John called the next dish "Chicken à la Ching" and he and my irrepressible husband laughed with ghoulish glee.

We had chopped meat that John said he hoped had never known how to bark, or worn a muzzle, and another dish that John swore was part of our fern in the dining-room.

"I'm glad you found a use for the fern, dear," he said. "It never would grow as a fern in good and regular standing should grow, and then you always had a faculty of placing it where the leaves tickled my ear at meals."

"You know, Estelle, our dining-room in the apartment is tiny, I'll admit that, and John has threatened to throw away that fern a dozen times.

We wound up with tea, and then the speaker read some Chinese poems—translations. I could not quite grasp the entire meaning, of course. One shouldn't—such things must be intangible to be appreciated. That is, to understand them one must not quite understand them. You know what I mean, Estelle, I am quite sure. John went to sleep so he was quiet at last.

After it was all over—John says there comes a time when everything is over—even going to the dentist's—we took a taxi and John told the driver to go to a down-town café. He ordered a steak, fried potatoes, coffee, ice-cream and pie for two. I protested because our Chinese dinner had cost us about four dollars, but then I ate a little, well, I really ate all my share, just to keep John company.

Of course I wasn't really hungry after the Chinese dinner and the feast of reason we had had.

This morning John said to me at the breakfast table, "And now my little Lotus Blossom, when we dine again, we eat à la Yankee, that is to say, à la good little old U. S. A. Do you get me? No more high-brow evenings, nor Foreign Pow-wows or Bow-wows for yours truly.

"Ah," he added, "here's our family fern tickling my ear as per usual. I maligned you. Glad I was wrong and we have our belongings intact instead of in the soup, à la Ching. What that was I ate in your place, little fern, I cannot guess, sea weed, or rag weed, or dog fennel—but why speak of dog? Let the dead past bury its dogs, or dead, I mean. No wonder the Chinese don't smile. If I ate that food every day you could never dig me out of the surrounding gloom. Old Hamlet would be a laughing hyena beside your low-brow hubby.

"By by, my little Chop Suey Queen, we eat at home to-night, *en famille*. Let's have roast beef and baked potatoes and pie."

Those were John's parting words. He is hopeless, my dear, but maybe he will forget by the next time I want to drag him out again.

Well, I must run home, Estelle, dear, but I just adore queer evenings and culture, don't you?

What a Ghost Thinks About

SCENE.—*The Ethereal Blue.*

CHARACTERS: ELIZA JANE MURDOCK, a *bona-fide ghost.*

THE FAMILY.

(ELIZA JANE'S *spirit protests.*)

It is the craziest, most pestiferous nonsense I ever heard, this calling folks back from another world to this mundane speer. Why in the name of common sense when folks gets through with this troublesome earth can't they be let alone? I'm speakin' with heartfelt words because I know.

I'm a ghost, the spirit of her who used to be Eliza Jane Murdock, who departed this life just three months and ten days ago.

For the fust time in my life, I'm gettin' a real rest. All the years of my existence I've cooked, and scrubbed, and saved, always for somebody else. When I was a girl, my mother died and left four children, three younger'n me, and we lived on a farm. If that don't mean work, then I ain't a God-fearin' spirit, but a lyin' sinner.

When the last one growed up, I married though I was over thirty. Don't think I got out of workin'. My husband was a good man, but a hustler, and I did a lot more grubbin' and scrubbin' for myself and him, and the babies that kept a-comin'.

I will say fer John that he moved to town, but he

didn't believe much in hired girls, thought our hands was made for use; and the house was big and—Oh, lawsy!—I just kept at it, that's all—and there was more burdens than ever.

When the girls growed up they wanted college and dances and so I scrimped, and saved, and dressed in shirt waists, and plain skirts, so as they could have nice clothes and an education.

John was a good man, as I say, but he was some high-tempered, and given to growlin' like a bear when things didn't go to please him.

Our oldest boy was wild and got throwed out of school, and several jobs, and it cost me all my savin's to help him out of his scrapes. I used to worry myself sick about it.

When the girls got married, one by one, they brought their babies home for me to take care of, when they wanted to go out for the evenin's, or on a trip somewhere, and it seemed like I never got done raisin' families. I used to go to the church sociables for recreation, but land sakes! I was a good cook and so they set me to makin' cake, and cookin' the meals for the crowd, and fixin' up the refreshments. The word recreation makes me kinder smile.

I guess I was always like that Martha in the Bible, "troubled about many things." Somebody's got to trouble to get the work done, and it looked like I was born to serve. I never had no chance to "Stand and wait."

Then one day I got sick; and I must say sick as I was, I couldn't help laughin' to myself to see how helpless they all was. But my time had come, and I went out of the world, sort of smilin' to myself when I see their faces so sorrowful. I couldn't help but think they was wonderin' who was goin' to do

the work. They said I was smilin' because I could see into another world, but I wasn't. I was just thinkin' of the joke nature was playin' on them all, to take the drudge away.

I will say they dressed me up in my new black silk that I hadn't wore very much, only twict, once when Jennie was married,—Mabel eloped, and Carrie married before the dress was made—and once at a sociable with a big apron over it.

I looked nice and peaceful, I heard them sayin', and it seemed strange to be lyin' there with the rest up and putterin' around. It certainly was a new experience. John looked sad and kind of lost and I heard him say "Poor Eliza! She was a good wife and I guess I used to worry her walkin' round in my stockin' feet." It did use to worry me, but it seemed funny now to hear him say it.

Nothin' matters any more and it seems ridiculous that it ever did.

The children, the house, the cookin' and scrubbin' why, it all seems like a dream that it ever bothered me, any of it.

I certainly have been restin' ever since I died, until the other night when they was tryin' to communicate with me. What's all this craze for, about talkin' with the dead and callin' spirits back to earth anyhow? I know my folks would be wantin' me to take care of the baby, or bake a cake; so I've made up my mind not to materialize. I'm restin' for the fust time in my life and I'm goin' to make a good job of it.

Just Smile

A smile for every day in the year
Will keep the home fires burning.
Whether the days be merry or sad
The old world goes on turning.
Happiness radiates from within;
Kind words cost naught in the giving.
Smiles mean more than mountains of gold,
For they make life worth the living.

Mother

We crown her queen, not only of the May,
But dearest, reigning queen of every day.
Her throne is not of gold;
No ermine robes her form enfold;
Upon her hand no royal ring;
Her sceptre's not a jeweled thing;
Yet undisputed is her place,
She rules each heart with tender grace.
Greater her sway than any other
Greater than queen her name—'tis Mother.

Her First Ride in an Automobile

SCENE.—*The home of the FLAPPER—Afternoon.*

CHARACTERS: THE FLAPPER.

ETHEL, *her dearest friend.*

THE YOUNG MAN.

(*The FLAPPER explains the exciting adventure.*)

Ethel, dearest, I am so glad you came over. I should simply expire if I did not tell some one of my latest experience. Everything is at sixes and sevens between Dad and myself. Dad is certainly sore, just like a dear old grumbly bear. I suppose if I had been killed, or hurt or something, my parental parent would have had qualms of conscience, but just now he is treating me with cold disdain.

I know you are dying to hear all about it from the first to the last. I certainly have had a hectic week. You know Dad gave me a darling little car, purple, lined with gray, the most adorable thing; and he warned me I must not run it until I knew thoroughly how, about the whole thing. That was perfectly all right and I did not resent his command, as I do sometimes. I went out for my first lesson and—my last for a time at least. Honey, they certainly use the queerest terms in connection with a car! Talk about exams!—they are an A. B. C. primer compared to the language of the luring motor.

Dad says my great trouble is that I think I know

everything all at once, and don't like to be told. But you know, Ethel, parents have a penchant for talking with the wisdom of the ancients, and making a noise like progenitors, and so I do not always listen although I appear to do so, to give the proper home atmosphere. I have the cunningest new motor coat, simply spiffy, and a sport hat, and there was a really sort of passable looking instructor,—rather cute. Dad abhors the word "cute" but he certainly was rather nice, the instructor, I mean. Of course Dad is nice generally. After the instructor had told me to put in the switch key, and throw the switch, and step on the starter, and give her the juice, and spark, I was a little confused but acted as though I knew all about it.

When he said to shove the clutch, and put her in first, and release the clutch, and get up a little momentum in first, and step on the clutch, and put her in second, and release, and get up a little momentum, and then step on the clutch again, and shove her into high, and release the clutch, and off we go,—my head was spinning around faster than the auto wheels.

Have another chocolate, Ethel. Isn't this an adorable cover? A valentine box! I'll tell you all about that later, after I pour forth the "Sad tale, mates." When we had been driving a while I thought I had mastered the language and ways of the prancing auto. The instructor pulled up to the curb and went into the store to do an errand for me. As I was sitting in the machine at the curb another machine came tearing down the street, curved and swerved and nearly hit me. I screamed, and the young man, of course there was a young man, finally stopped his car and got out.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, I hope I did not frighten you," he said, lifting his cap with the most marvellously penitent look on his face.

He was the best looking thing, Ethel, in the classiest belted coat and fuzzy cap.

"Couldn't you see me sitting here?" I said, trying to look severe. "Your eyesight must be defective. You should consult an oculist."

"I certainly did see you, a block away, but how could I keep away from you? It was the moth and the candle," he answered humbly.

Wasn't that the cleverest remark, Ethel? So romantic!

"Do not be absurd," I tried to say severely.

"I am a beginner," he began.

"Indeed," I interrupted, coldly. "No one would ever suspect it."

"Fair lady, I beg of you to excuse me," he answered, "and I am sure you will be gracious. I wonder what was wrong. This thing was going all right." He added with the most rueful sort of look, "Maybe you can tell me. Would you be so kind?"

Of course I had to act as though I knew all about it after he had appealed to my judgment, Ethel, and so I said in a superior way:

"Possibly your magneto's low, or you stepped on the wrong carburetor."

He looked at me in an odd sort of a way, and said he hadn't thought of that. Then he apologized for not having introduced himself before, and gave me his card. Who do you think it was, Ethel? Wells Webster, the football star at Harton College, and I suppose that you guess now that it was he who sent me the chocolates. Right-o—but of that more, anon. Of course, after he had made that

perfectly nice appeal to my knowledge of motors, Ethel, I could not act as though I had never run a machine before, and so I tried to look very wise, then I was seized with an impulse to show him how to run a machine; in fact he asked me to explain. Dad says I get spasms when I think I know everything, but Dad is a parent and parents are hyper-critical. I think that's a lovely word. We had that in English the other day.

Anyhow, I elucidated about a few things, and then I was afraid the instructor would come out and spoil it all, and so I told Mr. Webster I must be on my way, and I started. For a block or two all went well, and then I stepped on the accelerator, or the spark plug, or Heaven knows what, and I couldn't stop. Down the street I tore like a mad thing. People ran out of my way screaming, and every one motioned and yelled, and I was hollering "Stop it, somebody, it's running away."

Wildly I tore on without a speed limit, and landed on the sidewalk crashing into a store window.

"Begorra, the Angels or the Fairies or somethin' saved ye from bein' kilt intirely," the policeman said when he took my name, "and it's lucky, too, you warn't murderin' everybody in sight."

I landed in the Speeders' Court the next morning, Ethel, and what do you think? Wells Webster did too. He had followed me at a breakneck speed. Wasn't that simply thrilling? Dad said there were two of us, and so did his Dad. It seems the two Dads knew one another in business. Our autos are in the repair shop; but Ethel, he is coming to call to-night, and just think, if it hadn't been for the machine, I never would have known him. Isn't speed perfectly wonderful?

Little Mary Plays the Piano

SCENE.—*The home of LITTLE MARY on a pleasant afternoon. The piano stands near the window from which there is a view of the street where MARY's friends are playing. MARY is seated at the piano.*

CHARACTERS: LITTLE MARY }
MARGE-REE } her Friends.
RUBY }
AUNT BELLE, *the mentor.*

(NOTE:—*This monologue may be given when seated at the piano or it may be presented by the reader at a table, the tune being hummed.*)

(MARY plays the piano and expostulates.)

(Counts). ONE and Two and THREE and FOUR and—oh dear! oh dear! I'm so tired of these old scales. I don't see whoever 'vented a piano anyway. A Victrola is much nicer. You just turn the crank and the music comes out and you don't have to learn it or anything. I wish I could be just like my kitty and play about or sleep all day. (Pauses.) I hear Aunt Belle up-stairs. I think she's lis'ning. (Counts and plays.) ONE and Two and THREE and FOUR and — (Looks out of the window.) There's Marge-ree on her roller skates, and Ruby Wilson jumping rope.

My fam'bly is the mostest cruel people in this block. My mother said to practice half a' nour when she went to the club. I jest s'pose she's having a good time and has forgot her very own child. (*Listens. Calls.*) Yes'm, Aunt Belle, I am practicing. How long have I practiced now? Only fifteen minutes! I'm most pos'tive it's longer than that. Haven't I a clock? Yes'm, Aunt Belle, but I think it's awful out of order. It has the longest minutes of any clock that ever was. I think it oughter be fixed. What, Aunt Belle? You want to read? I musn't 'sturb you? No'm I won't. She is gone in the back room. I kind of wish Aunt Belle was more deafer than she is, but I guess she isn't quite old 'nuff yet.

(*Counts.*) ONE and Two and THREE and FOUR and—ONE and Two and THREE and FOUR and—Here comes Marge-ree upon the porch. (*Jumps up and beckons.*) Marge-ree, come to the window. I'll raise it. I can't come out now—yet. I have to practice for lots and lots of minutes more. Wait, don't go down. I want to show you that valentine I got last month. Yes, I know you saw it, but it's jest bu'ful and I keep it in the box on the mantel. I thought you'd like to see it again. I just bet Bobbie Miller sent it. 'Cause here's a "B" and a "M" in the corner. Ain't—I mean aren't it jest lovely?

(*Listens.*) Yes'm, Aunt Belle, I'm practicing. Wait, Marge-ree. Watch how quick my fingers go. You don't want to? Well, come back in a minute. I'll be out pretty soon. Good-bye. (*Counts.*) ONE and Two and THREE and FOUR and, ONE and Two and—Let's see what time it is. Oh, dear, there's 'bout ten minutes more. Here's Ruby.

(*Beckons and calls.*) Come to the window, Ruby. Look, Ruby, see my kitty. She's jumped up on the piano. I'll make her play. Come, kitty, practice. That's a good child. Now—ONE and Two and THREE and FOUR and — Ain't, I mean aren't she the darlingest thing? What did you say, Ruby? You can play a piece. That's nothing. So can I. Listen, Ruby. (MARY plays "*The Cuckoo*" out of tune.)



There—Aunt Belle's calling. Yes'm, Aunt Belle, I am practicing. You don't want me to play that piece? Well, I was jest resting my fingers from those old scales. Are you going, Ruby? Wait for me, you and Marge-ree. Wait now—be sure. (*Counts.*) ONE and Two and THREE and — (*Calls.*) Oh, Aunt Be—ull! Aunt Be—ull! Why, Aunt Belle, you know the lady next door, the one that's been sick, well, she's on the porch. I'm 'fraid I might 'sturb her, practicing. Don't you think I'd better stop? You don't think so? The time? It's just about two more of those slow minutes on this old clock. It's awful all wrong, Aunt Belle. Can't I go out now? I mean may I go out now? Did you say I'd drive you 'stracted? What, Aunt Belle! I worry you to death? Well—yes'm—May I go now? Oh, goodie! (*Calls.*) O-oo-hoo, Marge, I'm comin! O-oo-hoo, Ruby, wait till I get my skates! Yes'm, Aunt Belle, I have my coat and my hat. Goodie, goodie! I'm going out! O-oo-hoo, Marge-ree, here I come!



[*NOTE.—This is the correct tune, "The Cuckoo." It is merely given here to enable the reader to hum or play it incorrectly as given in the monologue. The counting "One and Two and" must be in a loud precise tone.]*

How She Sells Waists

SCENE.—*Waist department of a large dry-goods store.*

CHARACTERS: THE YOUNG SALESLADY.

BEATRICE, *another young saleslady.*

VARIOUS CUSTOMERS.

(*The YOUNG SALESLADY chatters.*)

Oh, Beatrice, I am simply paralyzed this morning. I danced until 3 A. M. Say, I'll tell the Universe, Harry is some toddler. I was so sleepy it took Ma half an hour to wake me. I have a new marcel on my hair, tied it up last night so it wouldn't get mussed. Howju like it? Here comes an old chromo. This is the morning I'd like to kill a few customers before lunch. Waists? Yes, this is the counter. What color? Light, or dark? Here's a lovely beaded brown, the very latest. Will this Georgette wear? Sure, I can recommend it for I bought one myself last week. It's only twenty-five dollars. Well,—of course, we have cheaper ones. Light blue? Why—er—yes—but they don't bring them in the larger sizes. Of course I don't mean you're large or anything like that. This one is fifteen dollars. Too much? Just about what price did you wish to pay? Advertised some at five fifty? Oh, those are in the basement, I presume. The floor-walker will direct you to the elevator.

Imagine, Beatrice, that shape in a light blue! The

more bubbly they are, the more conspicuous waists they want. Ain't it a fright? Say, Bee, I bought me some galoshes. They click just too cute for anything when I walk. Harry says he can hear me coming a block. What, Madam? Will I stop talking long enough to wait on you? That's what I'm here for. You didn't think so? I'll tell you something Harry said, Bee, in a minute. It was a scream, he's some witty kid. Yes, Madam. Of course, I'll wait on you. Georgette, or a silk waist? Cotton? Those are in the third aisle to the left. She looked like a cotton customer, Bee, I just knew it. Ain't they the killing things the way they ask if this is the waist counter, and here are dozens of waists in plain sight?

Well, Bee, about that funny thing Harry said. I must hurry and tell you before some other old cat comes up. Harry slipped on a banana peel last night, and he said, "That doesn't appeal to me." Don't you see it, Bee? Peel—banana peel—wasn't that the cleverish sort of thing to say? I just howled, but Bob Burns said that it was a bum joke. Isn't Bob the green-eyed thing? What, Miss? You want a mauve waist? Mauve—mauve, let me see. Here are some pretty new styles, braided and embroidered. What size? Here's a fancy beaded style. Simply grand! I sold one to Mrs. Get Richly on the Drive yesterday. What's that? Haven't I any idea what color mauve is? Why certainly, it's a—a—You don't care what Mrs. Get Richly bought?

She's gone, Bee. Wasn't she the snippy thing? I don't believe she wanted waists anyhow. Honest to goodness, Bee, I believe Harry was almost ready to propose last night. I vow I do. He was awfully

sort of mushy and spoony, and said my eyes would drive a man mad, they were so sort of vampish like. What's that? Marie says he says that to every girl? Marie's jealous, and she's just crazy about Harry, absolutely gone on him. I don't believe it—that he has a case on every girl. Anyhow, I should worry, there's plenty of good fish. You heard he was engaged to a girl from his home town—Coketown, Pennsylvania? Marie says she knows the girl? Well, that's what he looks like. I always thought so. A small-town guy. Coketown, Pennsylvania, huh!

I was only spoofing him anyhow. I'm really dippy about a feller in our block. I mean he's wild about me. Here comes two shoppers, I know the cut of their jibs. I have to pull down every waist in stock, can't get out of it.

(Half an hour later.)

Believe me, Bee, I'm all wore out. Showed 'em every waist in the place, and they never bought a stitch! Here comes that woman with the busy kid. You take her. If I do, I'll slap the kid's face and lose my job. I came near doing it last week. Anyhow, it's my lunch time. I'm going out to get some cream puffs and a sundae. Howju like my new muskrat coat? Paw says that women ought to be ashamed to look a muskrat in the face. What kind of looking animals are they anyway? Say, about Harry, you needn't think I care. I'll admit, too, he's awful silly, and tells the rummiest jokes. There's that feller from our block, across the aisle. I guess I can stick him for the lunch and get a regular feed. I'll be back at 12:30. Bye bye.

Love and the Jungle

SCENE.—*The Hospital barracks at Port Au Prince, Hayti, several days after a raid by the Mountain bandits.*

CHARACTERS: THE SERGEANT.

HIS BUDDY.

MARION, *the wife.*

(THE SERGEANT *rambles on to his BUDDY.*)

I am going fast, Buddy. No matter what they say, I know it is a question of days. The black devils got me, but we drove 'em back. I guess they know Uncle Sam means business and they'll stay up there in the mountains, eh, Bud? But I'm going—I've got mine. It's retribution, Bud, and I want to tell you something before I go. It will ease my mind to confess.

No, I don't want a preacher, just you, boy. We've weathered it together in this hot hell, here in Hayti. We've listened to the jabbering blacks and clinched our fists and steeled our hearts at the maddening sameness of the days and the long monotony of the nights. We've fought the devil bandits and chased them back, but one of them got me, kid. I croaked plenty of 'em before they did, though. I've had three years more of it than you, Buddy.

The folks in the States don't know much about the heat and the deadly lonesomeness of it all.

We're just marines to them, protecting 'em in Hayti.

I left a little wife behind in the States and she was crazy to come down to me. Wrote she wouldn't be afraid of anything. She was proud because they made me a sergeant and—well, she wanted to come and there was no saying "No." It was like heaven when she first came, Buddy, but by and by I saw she was restless and blue and she'd cry a good deal and so I sent her for a change to the zone. It was just the same, only worse when she came back, and one day when the boat came from Cristobal and went on again, she went with it. I didn't know until I found the letter.

"I despise it all," she said, "and I can stand no more. I hate the beggars, the heat and the everlasting procession of black women in the market place, with their turbans and trays of tropical fruits on their heads, and their queer French talk. We are not suited to each other. I have found it out too late. I do not love you any longer."

I don't know how I finished the letter, Bud, maybe I didn't finish it, but I must have because she told me where to reach her.

The steward on the boat told me there was some one else, a young fellow by the name of West, the assistant purser of his boat. She had seen him coming down. There were moonlight nights and four or five days on a ship seem a long time. What was the climax? Well, Bud, she saw him again in Cristobal when she went to the Zone. The boat was there a week and—oh, what's the use, kid, of explaining? She was tired of me, that's all.

I wrote her she could get a divorce. I wouldn't try to hold her against her will. Sounds tame, don't

it, but I didn't forget. She did get a divorce, Bud, but he didn't marry her. I heard him boast of it one night at a cabaret on Front Street in Colon, where I went on a furlough. Men in uniform are not allowed there, but we fellows sat behind a screen.

He was with a group of officers from his boat and I heard one of them say:

"How's the little girl that had a crush on you, West?"

"Oh, the Milton girl? Why, I threw her over. Only a passing fancy. One can't marry them all, you know."

I sprang up, but the other fellows held me back. It meant the guard house for us all if we were caught. Then I heard him say:

"I'm going into the jungle to-morrow, if I can get a guide."

I followed him out on to Front Street and when the others went into the commissary, I tapped him on the shoulder.

"I am going into the jungle to-morrow," I said. "I heard you say you wanted a guide. You may go with me."

He had never seen me and I did not tell him my name. We went the next day, Buddy, into the tangled shades, through the winding trails, where the wild things live. Snakes wriggled into the underbrush; iguanas darted across the paths; brilliant birds flew about us; orchids clung to the trees in a glory of bloom; monkeys peered at us from the branches chattering in anger and surprise. Wild roars and strange cries made my man start as I led him further into the dark places, where white man never trod.

"Let us go back," he said. "I'll go back, not you," I answered. And I threw him down upon the ground. "Lie there, you dog, my name is Milton. Find your way out if you can."

I came out of the jungle alone. For days he wandered and when they found him he was babbling of strange shapes that he had seen and the horror of it all was in his eyes, for his reason was gone forever.

"Vengeance is mine," saith the Lord. I heard that once somewhere, Buddy, and I took the matter in my own hands, and I guess this is retribution. I'll have to answer for it to a higher court.

* * * * *

Buddy! Buddy! Where am I? Hold my hand. Who is that at the door? What, Buddy? I've been ill? Delirious? Open the door. Marion—Marion, little girl, you've come back to me. Now I shall die happy. Not die? The doctor says I'll get well. But West—I left him in the jungle, God forgive me. What, little girl? I've been in a delirium since the bandits fought us? Thank God, you were not here. Yes, yes, I remember you went to Cristobal for a rest. I thought you had gone back to the States—to West—you know you were so discontented, I sent you away for a change. What, dear, you are sorry you were blue and complained of it all? Never mind, I have you now. I know I was lonely when you went away and jealous because you told me about meeting West and dancing with him and once I was lost in the jungle, so I mixed it all up in my delirium, I guess. Those devils gave me a nasty wound.—Oh, dearie, thank God you were not here. I don't think they'll come again.

Yes, Buddy, old man, you may go if you like.
God bless you.

Marion, I won't worry now, and I'll learn to
dance when I get well, if you want me to. What,
little girl? You don't mind. You are sorry you
complained? You want only me? Hold me tight,
sweetheart, nothing else matters.

The Unwritten Story

SCENE.—*A Newspaper Office.*

CHARACTERS: THE CUB REPORTER.

THE GIRL.

THE CITY EDITOR.

(THE CUB REPORTER *buzzes.*)

Swell thing to work on a big newspaper—I don't think. And a great little idea, to have a day off! Like fun it is! If this is your job and you want a day of repose, plug up your 'phone.

There was I—Jack Harvey, reporter on the *Great Daily Wheeze*, snoozing away for fare-you-well, on my one day off a week—me, with ungodly hours all of the other six—when the 'phone bell buzzed next to my ear.

And then, the dream I was having! Ye gods! Never will I be able to have such a dream again. I thought I was the city editor, and, oh joy! I was balling out everybody in sight, calling them "Dubs" and "Boneheads," in the sweet mellifluous tones of the old man.

I don't know what mellifluous means, but it's a good word.

The buzzing 'phone called me to earth—or rather to the cold floor. No Alladin's lamp in mine! Real facts! And the City Ed. crabbing on the other end of the line, about one of the boys who was ill and I was to take his assignment. It seems that a kid had gotten away with \$1,000 from Old Million-

bucks, and the old sinner was making a howl like a coyote on a dark night.

I felt like taking my hat off to anybody who could squeeze a dollar from the old miser—much less \$1,000, so in my heart I wanted to see the kid make a getaway. Did I take plenty of time to get into my readymades? You know it. Finally I sallied forth merrily. That merrily is sarcasm. Get me?

Old Millionbucks hadn't given the story to the police. He wanted to get the money first and then he wanted revenge with a big R. Hanging, or life, or any little thing like that. The kid lived in a flat with his sister. I suppose you think I fall for every pretty girl I see. Nothing doing. But that sister! Peaches and cream and brown eyes—say, think of all the classy Janes you ever saw, and then some. She had been crying when she came to the door and I tried to steel my heart, but it was no use. The weeps sort of got me. I followed her into the flat feeling like a dog sheep-stealing.

She was scared when she found I was a reporter, but I took ten minutes convincing her that reporters were naturally the most kind-hearted, sympathetic ginks in the world.

At last she opened up her heart and seemed to want to tell some one her troubles, and if it hadn't been too early in the game, I would have pillow'd her head on my manly bosom for æons and æons. That's a good word too.

The kid and she were alone, orphans, and she said he had been a good brother. "I love him dearly," she sobbed. Lucky kid! I felt just like a sob sister.

"I don't want to excuse him, but maybe it was

my fault," she added. "I was discontented sometimes. We were trying to pay for the furniture, and I wanted pretty clothes and often I complained, because I don't earn very much myself, and it takes so much just for living expenses. When he told me what he had done, I could have died. Anything was better than that. I was so afraid and I sent him away. Maybe it was wrong, but I couldn't face it. I have nearly all the money, all but \$200. I'll work to pay it back. You won't let them hunt for him, will you? I couldn't stand it—to have him in jail. I'm a little older than he is, and I've taken care of him for five years, that is, until he began to work himself. I'll pay the money back. Oh, I'll go down on my knees to his employer ——"

"No you don't," I interrupted. "You don't kneel to that old bird. That old tartar ought to be hung anyway. Wait, girlie,"—I had to call her girlie, she seemed so dependent, sort of—"I'll see what I can do. Say, you go with me to our office and we'll see the boss."

"Not to the newspaper office!" she gasped.

"Sure," I answered. "Our Ed. isn't a bad sort," although I gulped when I said it.

Worse and more of it! While we were talking, in walked the kid, with his conscience all messy, and wanted to give himself up. It was all I could do to persuade him to get out and stay out until the thing had blown over.

We, the girl and I, went away from the little flat—say, it was a cute flat and looked homey—and went down to the office to see the City Ed. No wonder I gulped. I had been sent on a story and here I was coming back, all mushy, with a girl. It was all day for me, I knew.

The Ed. was in his shirt sleeves, as per usual, and looked like a caged lion, but I guess it was the girl's eyes did it.

I stumbled right into my story.

"I'm a bum reporter, I know, but just this once maybe we can fix this thing up," and I let him know quietly without giving it away to the girl, that I had \$200 of my own.

"After this you can fire me," I added, "for falling down on an assignment."

You think newspaper eds. are all hard-boiled. Believe me, many things are hushed up in a news office that would make good snappy reading.

I say it was the girl's eyes, maybe it was her way of talking, that did it; anyhow the Ed. had something on Old Millionbucks, about a crooked deal or two. Whatever it was, the old skeezicks let the matter drop when he got his money, and I wasn't fired either. Oh, well! You want to know the end of the story?

The girl and I are going to be married next week and I'm to have a whole week off for a honeymoon with a mysterious \$200 from the boys in the office for a gift, and we're going to keep the flat too.

Say, I take back what I said when I began. I'm some happy that 'phone bell rang on my day off—for one time at least—I'll tell the world.

Si Wanted Peace

What's that you're saying, Doctor?
I ain't going to git well?
Jest thought this gol-dern sickness
Was lastin' quite a spell.

Got to up an' die sometime, I guess,
An' I ain't so mighty young.
Fer five an' seventy year I've clumb
Life's ladder rung by rung.

My ole woman died last Christmas,
An' fer six months I've had a rest.
The days was nice an' peaceful,
Let me git this off my chest.

May seem kinder mean to say,
But she chewed the rag all day,
From daylight until chores was done,
An' till I hit the hay.

My muddy feet on the kitchen floor!
My terbaccer spilled around!
My socks wore out a heap too fast!
A million faults, she found.

Nothin' was right I ever done.
I sold the crops too cheap.
Why, Doctor, fer to hear her talk,
I wa'n't wuth my board an' keep.

This farm is mine, so I jest stayed
An' listened to the clack.
When a woman gits wound up like that,
You ain't got no come back.

It's been so quiet sense she died,
I hoped that it would last.
Shall you git a preacher fer me, Doc?
You think I'm goin' fast?

No, Doctor, I don't want no prayers;
I know how the preacher'll pray;
That I may meet my wife in heaven,
Is jest what he will say.

I hope she's there, but this I know,
Ef I want peace—oh, well,
She's sure busy chewin' a golden rag,
An' I'd ruther go to—(*Coughs.*).
Ain't this a bad cough, Doc?

A Christmas Sketch

SCENE.—*One corner of the kiddies' nursery, on Christmas Eve.*

CHARACTERS: SANTA CLAUS.

BOBBIE.

BELL.

BUNNIE.

BESS.

(Enter THE CHILDREN *in their night gowns.*)

BOBBIE. Come on, let's hang up our stockings—and hurry up.

BELL. Yes, hurry, Santa might come.

BESS. But he won't come while we are here, will he?

BELL. No, we have to sleep first.

BUNNIE. I would just love to see Santa Claus.

BOB. Some night I'm going to sit up and nab him.

BELL. Oh! you wouldn't dare, Bobbie.

BUN. No, don't! He might run away!

BESS. And then we wouldn't get any presents.

BOB. (*pins stocking to the mantel*). This is my place.

BELL. This is mine. (*Pins up stocking.*)

BESS. This is mine. (*Pins up stocking.*)

BUN. And this is mine. (*Pins up stocking.*)

BOB. Let's read our letters. (*All are seated in a semi-circle on the floor.*)

BELL. All right. (*Reads.*)

"Dear Santa: I want a set of furs, bran' new, and a gold ring and a silk sweater, and a book. I want new furs, remember, Santa, and not my sister's old ones —"

BOB. (*interrupting*). Do you want the earth?

(BELL *jumps up, puts the note in her stocking, then sits down again.*)

BESS (*reads*). "Dear Santa Claus;
I like you because
You are jolly and fat.
I want a new hat,
A box of paints, too,
A silk dress all blue,
A doll an' —"

BOB. Hold on! You want the earth and the moon.

(BESS *puts letter in her stocking, sits down again.*)

BUN. (*reads letter*). "Dear Mr. Santie Claus:
I want a tin horn to play auto'bile."

BELL (*scornfully*). What's an auto'bile?

BUN. Why you know, it's one of those things that blows horns and runs over people. (*Reads.*) "And I want a doll buggy, and a new doll piano, and everything. Your loving Bunnie. P. S. Mamma wants a new gas stove, and a new hired girl. And Papa wants some more money."

BOB. (*laughing*). Oh, a doll piano, you couldn't

get that in your stocking. I'll read my letter.
(*Reads.*) "Dear Santa: You are a good pal. I wish I could see you. Please give me a sled, a pair of skates, a new top, a baseball bat, a pair of guinea pigs, a white rat and a pony. Lovingly, Bobbie. P. S. I'd like a set of soldiers, too."

BELL. Well, you want the earth, and the moon and sun, all three.

BESS. Let's hurry and get to bed.

(*All jump up. BUNNIE and BOBBIE put letters in stockings.*) [All exit.

(*BOBBIE returns, cautiously pulling off his night-gown. He is fully dressed. Sits down quietly left of fireplace. Noise is heard, a whirring sound. Enter SANTA CLAUS, puts down his bundle, rubs his hands in front of the fire, taking several long breaths. Does not see BOBBIE.*)

BOB. (*rushing forward*). Hello, Santa, I've caught you.

SANTA. Well, bless my soul, so you have. This is surely an age of progress.

BOB. (*jumping up*). Where are your reindeer?

SANTA. Reindeer, my boy, reindeer, in these scientific times? Why, I came in the air, of course. And believe me, it was some trip. I almost scraped one of my wings off against the North Pole when I started. And I nearly bumped my head on the sharp corners of those bright stars up there. Then I had to fly out of the way of the Great Bear, and stop to get some milk from the Milky Way. You know milk is very high these days. Then I took a drink out of the Big Dipper, and stopped long

enough to bottle up a little weather for the weather man. But here I am at last with my pack. Have you been a good boy?

BOB. (*eagerly*). Oh, yes!

SANTA. Sure?

BOB. (*hesitatingly*). Yes; that is, for a week I have. (*Runs to entrance L., calling.*) Wake up, wake up, everybody. Santa has come.

(*The rest rush in and crowd around SANTA.*)

SANTA. Bless my soul, what a lot of little dears. But how does it happen you are all dressed? (*Sits down.*)

BELL. Oh, we had our clothes on under our nightgowns. We were so afraid we wouldn't wake up.

BUN. Where are the presents?

ALL (*clamoring*). Yes, the presents, the presents.

SANTA. One at a time, one at a time, please. Here are the toys in my bag. (*Hands them out.*) Here is a book for you, (*To BELL.*) and a horn for you, (*To BUNNIE.*) a drum for Bobbie, and a doll for Bess. I expect you wanted a lot more things. The world is so full of children that we are going to remember everybody, and not be selfish. This is the true spirit of Christmas—loving and giving. The more we love and give the happier we are, eh, children? Now if you're not afraid to fly I'll take you with me and help give presents to the poor children. The very spirit of love and of Christmas breathes on one and all.

(*Then he catches their hands and all circle in a ring to the tune of the "Battle Cry of Freedom."*)

ALL. Christmas, oh, Christmas,
Our hearts ring with cheer,
Christmas, oh, Christmas,
Glad time of the year.
We'll fly with dear Santa,
We kiddies know no fear,
Shouting for Christmas and Old Santa.

(SANTA *picks up bag, calling.*)

SANTA. Away, away, fly with me!

[*Exit all.*

